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72% OF THE STEEL**  
used in the Bangabandhu Road Tunnel

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NATION'S  
PROGRESS**





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## Govt can't be overthrown by covert attacks

PM tells Narsingdi rally, says people don't support BNP's movement



UNB, Narsingdi

Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina yesterday said her government cannot be overthrown by carrying out clandestine attacks as the people are not behind the opposition movement.

"What can they do by enforcing blockades? They want to topple the government. But how can they overthrow the government? The government can't be ousted by secret attacks," she said.

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PHOTO: SHEIKH ENAMUL HUQ

People jostle in queues while waiting for their share of daily commodities at subsidised prices from an OMS truck in the capital's Rampura yesterday. With prices soaring in the markets, the desperation for cheaper essentials has been growing among the low-income groups.

## Appointment of EC officials as ROs unlikely

### Say commission officials

MOHIUDDIN ALAMGIR

The chances of appointing Election Commission officials as returning officers are slim as the BNP and Jamaat-enforced blockades have changed the political scenario which deputy and divisional commissioners should be more adept at dealing with, EC sources said.

EC sources said the commission primarily wanted to appoint EC officials as ROs in the districts that have fewer parliamentary seats.

But sources in the EC said the situation changed following law enforcers' clashes with political activists and the blockade that ensued.

Mentioning not enough time left until the polls schedule is announced, EC officials, seeking anonymity, said some in the EC want the DCs to be ROs as conducting an election will be a huge task under the current political situation and the EC needs full cooperation from all field-level officials.

"Now the coordination at the field level has become crucial. As the DCs and divisional commissioners have

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## JP shifting stance on polls-time govt

Many of its MPs pressing top leaders to join election under Hasina-led govt

RASHIDUL HASAN

The Jatiya Party appears to have softened its tough stance against elections under the ruling Awami League.

JP Chairman GM Quader used to say that with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina in power, the next national election cannot be free and fair.

He also used to say that there should be a system in which the government cannot influence or control polling.

That's why GM Quader's November 5 comment that his party was cooperating with the election process came as a surprise to many.

The JP is making preparations to participate in the election, he said, adding that if the party decides otherwise, it will make an announcement.

JP insiders say many of their MPs and leaders want to participate in the election.

On several occasions in recent weeks, Raushan Ershad, chief patron of the party, said JP will participate in the next election held under Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.

In the last one and a half months, GM Quader has not made any harsh criticism of the PM in his statements sent to the media.

JP Secretary General Mujibul Haque Chunnu told this correspondent on November 6 that his party would participate in the election under Hasina if it is held in a free and fair manner.

JP insiders said Quader apparently softened his anti-government stance after his visit to India in late August.

A top JP leader said, 17 of the party's 27 MPs had met Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina at the Jatiya Sangsad on November 1.

A JP leader present at the meeting said the political situation and the next election were discussed at the informal meeting.

JP Chairman Quader said he was not aware of the meeting. However, Chunnu said he was aware of it.

"It was a courtesy call. But I didn't participate because of some technicalities," Chunnu said, adding that the JP was making preparations to participate in all 300 constituencies.

Asked whether the party will form an electoral alliance with the AL or participate independently, Chunnu said it would depend on the situation.

## Consensus must before polls schedule

Says Islami Andolan; otherwise, the party will march towards EC

STAFF CORRESPONDENT

Islami Andolan Bangladesh would march towards the Election Commission the day EC announces election schedule without political consensus and creating a level playing field, the party said today.

It also said it would hold protest rallies in every district and city the following day of the schedule announcement.

Ameer of the party Syed Muhammad Rezaul Karim said this during a press conference at the party's headquarter in Purana Paltan.

He demanded that the election schedule is not announced without political consensus and before a level playing field for all is created.

The party will finalise its next course of action on November 20 following talks with other parties, academicians, intellectuals, journalists, and professionals' organisations to resolve the ongoing national crisis.

Rezaul said the party would support all peaceful programmes of other opposition parties.

In a statement, Rezaul said the EC is rushing to announce the schedule as per the demands of the ruling party.

Asked if the party would run if the schedule was announced now, Rezaul said, "If the election is held under the present government in power, we won't participate in that election."

## Outcry grows as 'situation dire' in Gaza hospitals

REUTERS, Gaza/Jerusalem

Major hospitals remained cut off yesterday as Israel pressed on with its offensive in north Gaza where doctors said thousands of Palestinians were trapped in dire conditions.

Al Shifa and other hospitals in north Gaza, now the focus of Israel's month-old war, were barely able to care for patients, medical staff said.

More people are getting killed and wounded daily by Israeli bombardment campaign but there are fewer and fewer places for the injured to go.

Speaking from inside Al Shifa, Gaza health ministry spokesperson Ashraf Al-Qidra said Israeli fire was "terrorising medical officials and civilians alike".

The director general of hospitals in Gaza yesterday warned that the lives of hundreds of patients were at risk because of the catastrophic situation at al Shifa Hospital.

Palestinian Minister of Health Mai al-Kaila said Israeli forces "are not evacuating people from hospitals; instead, they are forcibly evicting the wounded onto the streets, leaving them to face inevitable death".

Israel's chief military spokesperson,

Rear Admiral Daniel Hagari, said on Saturday that Israel's military would help evacuate babies from the hospital at the request of staff there.

Al Qidra said that of 45 babies in total, three had already died and that they had not been told how to get the babies to safety.

A plastic surgeon in the hospital said the bombing of the building housing incubators had forced them to line up premature babies on ordinary beds, using the little power available to turn the air conditioning to warm.

In the Indonesian Hospital in Beit Lahiya also in north Gaza, Mosab Subeih, a baby boy, had been rushed in from a house struck by an Israeli missile.

The Palestinian Red Crescent said medical staff at the second largest hospital in northern Gaza, Al-Quds, were struggling to care for those there with little medicine, food and water.

Shifa was also out of reach for the newly wounded, said Mohammad Qandil, a doctor at Nasser Hospital in Khan Younis in south Gaza, who is in touch with colleagues there.

The World Health Organisation said it had lost contact with the hospital and was worried about people trapped there.

80 aid trucks moved from Egypt into Gaza

Rafah crossing into Egypt reopens for foreign passport holders

## Saturn's moon may have essential ingredients for life

INDEPENDENT.CO.UK

Saturn's moon Enceladus may have all the ingredients necessary to host life, according to a new study based on data from Nasa's Cassini spacecraft mission.

The spacecraft ended its mission in 2017 but scientists are still pouring over the data it collected to understand more about Saturn and its moons.

Over the course of its mission, Cassini discovered geyser-like water plumes erupting through the icy shell of Saturn's moon Enceladus, long thought to be a potential place in the Solar System outside of the Earth with conditions conducive for life.

The spacecraft performed a close flyby of Enceladus in 2008 during which its instruments analysed the plumes.

Water in the plumes has been found to contain a range of volatile molecules such as carbon dioxide, water vapour, and also traces of nitrogen, and some complex organic compounds.

A new yet-to-be peer-reviewed study, posed as a preprint in arXiv, has now discovered ammonia and inorganic phosphorus in Enceladus' ocean.



Civilians and rescuers look for survivors in the rubble of a destroyed building following an Israeli bombardment in Khan Yunis in the southern Gaza Strip yesterday.

PHOTO: AFP

## BUSINESS

### INSURANCE SETTLEMENT

#### Nearly 10 lakh policyholders in trouble

Payments against claims of around 10 lakh policyholders are hanging in the balance as 29 life insurance companies are not clearing dues owing to a liquidity crisis, official figures showed.

The unsettled claims involved Tk 3,050 crore in the four years to the second quarter of 2023, according to data from the Insurance Development and Regulatory Authority (Idra).

The companies settled claims worth Tk 2,070 crore during the period, which accounted for 40.42 percent of the claims made.

STORY ON B1